

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 00122 230536Z

20

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-10 SAM-01 SAJ-01 NIC-01 AID-05

EB-07 COME-00 OES-03 /089 W
----- 003730

R 221030Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2580

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

COMIDEASTFOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR PFOR SO XF

SUBJECT: SIAD'S PROBLEM WITH SHEIKHS

REFERENCE: MOGADISCIO 0107

1. SUMMARY: GSDR IS STICKING TO ITS GUNS ON AMEND-
MENT OF KORAN'S TEACHING ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND IS
TAKING TOUGH LINE VIS-VIS PROTESTERS. POPULAR RRCTION
TO SENTENCING OF SHEIKHS REMAINS HIGHLY NEGATIVE.
INCIDENTS BETWEEN POLCNE AND POPULACE REPORTED FROM
SEVERAL CITIES, BUT GOVERNMENT APPEARS HAVE SITUATION
WELL UNDER CONTROL. IT APPEARS SIAD DETERMINED TO PUSH
THROUGH WITH WOMAF'S RIGHTS LAWS, BUT IT IS NOT RPT NOT
YET CLEAR WHETHER SHEIKHS WILL IN FACT BE EXECUTIED.
EXECUTION WOULD CREATE MORE EXPLOSIVE SITUATION.

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PAGE 02 MOGADI 00122 230536Z

END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL OFFICE HEAD ABDUVJADIR REPORTEDLY TOLD WORKERS COMMITTEE JANUARY 20 THAT ALL THOSE WHO OPPOSE REVOLUTION WOULD BE KILLED. ARREST OF INDIVIDUAL SHEIKHS HAS CONTINUED, AND MANY PERSONS HAVE BEEN DETAINED (SOME SAY 2,000 ARREST IN MOGADISCIO ALONE). PRESIDENT SIAD IN SPEECH JANUARY 21 SAID LAW WOULD BE PROCLAIMED INCORPORATING EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN. HE SAID NO ONE SHOULD HAVE FOUR WIVES OR HAVE FREEDOM TO DIVORCE HIS WIFE AT WILL AND THAT LAW IS NOW BEING DRAFTED TO THIS EFFECT. HIS SPEECH, WHICH ALLEGEDLY CONTAINED MUCH ABUSIVE LANGUAGE AGAINST OPPONENTS OF REGIME,

WAS RELEASED IN ONLY ABBREVIATED FORM.

3. DESPITE GOVERNMENT'S TOUGH LINE, HOWEVER, IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER DEATH SENTENCES WILL BE CARRIED OUT. GOVERNMENT-ORGANIZED DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 22 IN SUPPORT OF DEATH SENTENCES HAS BEEN CANCELLED. THIS IS PRUDENT MOVE, AS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT TO FORCE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE AND, IF THEY DID, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN DANGER THAT DEMONSTRATION WOULD HAVE TURNED AGAINST GOVERNMENT.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN HARGEISA WHEN POLICE ARRESTED SHEIKHS CONDEMNING GOVERNMENT DECISION ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS DURING FRIDAY SERVICES JANUARY 1, LARGE CROWDS FOLLOWED POLICE VANS TO POLICE STATION. THERE WERE ALLEGEDLY NUMEROUS INSTANCES OF VIOLENCE BETWEEN POLICE AND CROWDS, AND REGIONAL CHAIRMAN PRUDENTLY INTERVENED TO HAVE SHEIKHS RELEASED. HOWEVER, WHEN MOGADISCIO SHEIKHS GIVEN DEATH SENTENCES, HARGEISA SHEIKHS WERE ARRESTED ONCE AGAIN. THERE ARE REPORTS OF SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN OTHER CITIES, THOUGH THESE APPARENTLY NOT RPT NOT AS SERIOUS.

5. ARMY APPEARS STILL TO BE ON ALERT. SOLDIERS ARE IN BATTLE DRESS AND GENERALLY ABSENT FROM THEIR TRADITIONAL OFF-DUTY HANGOUTS. LOCAL RUMORS MAINTAIN SOLDIERS HAVE SAID THEY WILL NOT RPT NOT FIRE ON ANY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOGADI 00122 230536Z

DEMONSTRATORS, BUT PEOPLE GENERALLY ASSUME GOVERNMENT WILL DO WHAT THEY ARE TOLD.

6. SOME PEOPLE BLAME SOVIET INFLUENCE FOR GOVERNMENT'S "ANTI-ISLAM" ACTIONS. WORTH NOTING PERHAPS THAT A DENIAL BY POLITICAL OFFICE HEAD ABDULCADIR THAT SRC WOMEN'S RIGHTS DECISION WAS ATTRIBUTABLE TO OUTSIDE INFLUENCE WAS FRONT-PAGED IN OCTOBER STAR JAN. 21.

RUMORS OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT MAY THEREFORE BE WIDELY
BVKLIEVED. WE UNDERSTAND SOVIETS HAVE BEEN TOLD TO
KEEP OFF STREETS TO AVOID POSSIBILITY OF INCIDENTS.

7. REACTION OF LOCAL ARAB DIPLOMATS TYPIFIED BY
SAUDI CHARGE WHO SAID THAT HSDR'S ACTION WAS
"UNBELIEVEACLE". HE IS RETURNING TO JIDDA FOR WEEK'S
CONSULTATION. ALL AGREE THIS IS WORST POSSIBLE
BACKDROP FOR SOMALI FONSEC'S CURRENT AID-SEEKING
TOUR OF ARAB STATES.
VNBIM EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TELLS US (ANDNVHIS CONFIRMED
BY OTHER WITNESSEEXL THAT EGYPTIAN SHEIKH'S SERMON
AT ABDULCAIDR MOSQUE WAS NOT RPT NOT INFLAMATORY OF
CRITICAL OF GSDR. AMBASSADOR HAS ASKED PRESIDENT SIAD
TO REVERSE PNG ORDER AGAINST THIS SHEIKH BUT IS PREPARED
TO SEND HIM OUT ON THURSDAY PLANE. (NO OTHER SHEIKHS
HAVE BEEN PNG'D.)

9. MOTIVES FOR SIAD'S CRITUKISM OF MOSLEM TREATMENT
OF WOMEN ARE STILL A PUZZLE. SOME ASSERT IT WAS
DELIBERATE MANEUVER TO FLUSH SHEIKHS OUT AND DEAL THEM
SEVERE LESSON. OTHERS CLAIM SOVIET PRESSURE IS RESPONSIBLE.
WE STILL INCLINED FEEL MOST LOGICAL EXPLANATION IS THAT
SIAD WISHED TO DO SOMETHING FOR WOMEN, MISJUDGED SEVERITY
OF POTENTIAL REACTION, AND DECIDED CRACK DOWN HARD ON
WHAT HAS PROBABLY BEEN MOST OVERT DEMONSTRATION OF
OPPOSITION TO HIS REGIME SINCE EARLY DAYS OF REVOLUTION.

10. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS WILL DEPEND LARGELY ON WHETHER
EXECUTIONS CARRIED OUT. GOVERNMENT CONTROL APPARATUS
IS VERY STRONG, AND POPULATION HAS BECOME QUITE COWED OVER
THE YEARS. IN ABSENCE OF EXECUTIONS, WE DOUBT GOVERNMENT WILL
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ENCOUNTER SERIOUS DIFFICULTY, BUT CARRYING OUT OF DEATH
SENTENCES WOULD PRODUCE UNPREDICTABLE SITUATION.
KIRK

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